



## “Muhlenberg Brigade”

Hello, I am park ranger Marc Brier and I would like to tell you a little about the Muhlenberg Brigade. You are standing on the ground occupied by the Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania troops who served under Brigadier General John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg. Muhlenberg was born just a few miles from Valley Forge and was serving as a minister in Virginia when the Revolutionary War broke out. Muhlenberg exchanged his clerical robes for military uniform and joined the cause. This spot was the left flank of the camp and anchored this end of the outer line of the army’s defenses.

As in all the brigade locations, Engineers here laid out a blueprint - telling the soldiers where to construct their log shelters, camp kitchens, parade grounds and latrines. Soldiers formed squads of 12 and built cabins to General Washington’s specifications. The huts were to be 14 x 16 feet and to house the dozen enlisted men who built them. The men chinked the spaces between the logs and inside of the log chimneys with clay from the local soil. Roofs were made of either split wooden shingles, turf or thatch. Inside, the troops erected wooden plank bunks on which they would sleep by laying their wool blankets on top of straw mattresses.

Despite the winter elements, shortages of proper clothing, and a lack of essential tools such as saws and axes - all of the men were housed inside cabins within a month after arriving at Valley Forge. One of the soldiers characterized the average hut at Valley Forge saying that a typical cabin “afforded much better quarters than you would imagine, if you consider the materials, season & hurry in which it was built.”

The cabins in this area are all reproductions based on Washington’s Orders. The newest hut here was built by park staff and volunteers following our latest research on how the cabins were constructed. The mound at the rear of the brigade represents one of the bake ovens set in place under the direction of Baker General Christopher Ludwick.

Imagine if you can over 1,000 log cabins that would have stretched for miles along the perimeter of the camp, a sight that caused one of Washington’s men to refer to the encampment as a log city.